

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 06221 01 OF 02 271322Z POSS DUPE
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 OMB-01 FEA-01 ACDA-07
CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08
NRC-05 OES-07 DODE-00 ERDA-05 SS-15 SP-02 PM-05
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R 271230Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2979
INFO USMISSION PEKING
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 6221

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, BR
SUBJ: NUCLEAR ISSUE: PRESS COVERAGE

REF: BRASILIA 5996

1. SUMMARY. RECENT ARTICLES ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE IN THE
BRAZILIAN PRESS INCLUDE: (1) PRC AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS ON
PROLIFERATION AND THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY, (2) STATEMENTS
BY MEMBERS OF THE FRG'S SOCIAL CHRISTIAN UNION PARTY VISITING
BRAZIL, (3) BRAZILIAN PHYSICISTS MARCELLO DE SOUSA SANTOS
AND JOSE GOLDEMBERG CRITICISM OF GOB'S NUCLEAR POLICY, (4)
JOINT BRAZILIAN/YUGOSLAVIAN COMMUNIQUE DEFENDING THE RIGHT
OF ACCESS TO NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACEFUL ENDS (REFTEL).
THE FRG-USG HEADS OF STATE MEETING IN WASHINGTON WAS
COVERED BY BRAZILIAN PRESS BUT PROMPTED LITTLE OFFICIAL
OR EDITORIAL COMMENT. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 BRASIL 06221 01 OF 02 271322Z POSS DUPE

2. PRC AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL, CHANG TE-CHUN, WAS
QUESTIONED BY THE PRESS ABOUT THE BRAZILIAN/GERMAN NUCLEAR
ACCORD AND U.S. OPPOSITION TO THE AGREEMENT. ACCORDING
TO THE JORNAL DO BRASIL, HE REFUSED COMMENT ON THE
SPECIFICS OF THE ACCORD OR THE U.S. POSITION, BUT
STATED THAT HIS COUNTRY FAVORS THE DEVELOPMENT OF
NUCLEAR ARMS BY OTHER COUNTRIES FOR SELF-DEFENSE. HE

EXPLAINED THAT THE PRC DID NOT JOIN THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY BECAUSE IT REPRESENTS AN ATTEMPT BY THE SUPERPOWERS TO LIMIT THE THIRD WORLD'S ACCESS TO NUCLEAR ENERGY. CHANG TE-CHUN'S COMMENTS WERE PUT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THIRD WORLD UNITY BUT AVOIDED DIRECT CRITICISM OF THE U.S. POSITION ON THE NUCLEAR ACCORD.

3. WEST GERMAN PARLIAMENT MEMBERS ALBERT PROBST AND ALBERT SCHEDL BOTH OF THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN UNION MET WITH PRESIDENT GEISEL ON JULY 7. ACCORDING TO THE JORNAL DO BRASIL, PROBST DECLARED THAT HIS PARTY, AFTER INTIAL OPPOSITION TO THE GERMAN/BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR ACCORD, NOW FAVORS COMPLETION OF THE PACT. THIS WAS INTERPRETED BY THE JB AS STATING THAT BOTH THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY AND TE OPPOSITION SUPPORT THE NUCLEAR ACCORD. COMMENT. PRESIDENT GEISEL DOES NOT NORMALLY RECEIVE PARLIAMENTARY VISITORS. IT IS ALSO WORTH NOTING THAT VISIT TOOK PLACE DAY BEFORE SCHMIDT-CARTER MEETING IN WASHINGTON. END COMMENT.

4. IN A LONG ARTICLE IN THE JORNAL DO BRASIL, JULY 17TH, MARCELO DAMI DE SOURSA SANTOS (PROFESSOR OF NUCLEAR PHYSICS AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF SAO PAULO) AND JOSE GOLDEMBERG (PRESIDENT OF THE BRAZILIAN PHYSICS SOCIETY AND LONG-TIME CRITIC OF BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BRASIL 06221 01 OF 02 271322Z POSS DUPE

POLICY) CRITICISED THE GERMAN-BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR ACCORD AND CALLED FOR A NATIONAL NUCLEAR PROGRAM. PROFESSOR DAMI QUESTIONED THE ACQUISITION OF GERMAN TECHNOLOGY ON SEVERAL GROUNDS INCLUDING: THE RELIANCE ON URANIUM DESPITE THE LIKELIHOOD OF URANIUM SHORTAGE IN THE FUTURE, THE FUTURE AVAILABILITY OF BREEDER TECHNOLOGY WHICH WOULD ALLOW MORE EFFICIENT USE OF DIMINISHING URANIUM SUPPLIES, AND THE NEED FOR BRAZIL TO DEVELOP AN INDEPENDENT PROGRAM. DAMI SUGGESTED THAT AN ENRICHMENT PLANT WOULD SOON BECOME AN OUTMODED WHITE ELEPHANT WHILE NATURAL URANIUM REACTORS WERE RELATIVELY SIMPLE, COULD BE DEVELOPED BY BRAZIL AND WOULD REMAIN AN ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE INVESTMENT THROUGH THIS CENTURY. (COMMENT. DAMI SEEMED TO BE REPEATING HIS FAMILIAR LINE, AS HE DID BEFORE GOB DECIDED ON LWR SYSTEMS, WITHOUT ADDITION OF NEW ELEMENTS IN HIS CRITICISM. END COMMENT:)

5. PROF. JOSE GOLDEMBERG QUESTIONED WHETHER GOB WILL ATTAIN ITS OBJECTIVES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY UNDER NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH FRG, CITING PROBLEMS IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER DEPSITE INSTALLATION OF NUCLEAR

INDUSTRY IN BRAZIL. HE SAID USG OBJECTIONS TO TRANSFER OF REPROCESSING WERE VERY STRONG AND SUBSTANTIAL, BASED ON FORD FOUNDATION STUDY AND NOT MERE POLITICAL MANEUVERS. GOLDEMBERG REITERATED THAT BRAZIL HAD TIME TO EVALUATE NUCLEAR POLICY AND PROGRAM, DELAYED BY US ACTIONS SINCE ENERGY DEMAND GROWTH HAD SLOWED AND OTHER ENERGY ALTERNATIVES (CONSERVATION, ALCOHOL, SMALLER HYDROELECTRIC SOURCES, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER REACTOR TYPES, ETC.) COULD CONTRIBUTE TO MEET NATIONAL NEEDS. (COMMENT: GOLDEMBERG'S STATEMENT WAS MOST FORTHRIGHT SUGGESTION IN BRAZILIAN PRESS OF SUCCESS OF US NON-PROLIFERATION INITIATIVES AND OF SOLID BASIS OF US POSITIONS. END COMMENT.)

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 06221 02 OF 02 271355Z POSS DUPE
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 BRASILIA 6221

6. IN AN ARTICLE BY WILLIAMS WAAK ENTITLED "SCHMIDT IMPROVES HIS POSITION FOR DIALOGUE" THE O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO REPORTED ON JULY 7 THAT IN HIS DISCUSSIONS IN OTTAWA AND WASHINGTON, SCHMIDT WOULD ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME AMERICAN AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, CANADIAN RESTRICTIONS ON THE EXPORT OF URANIUM TO UEOPE. THE ARTICLE STATED THAT SCHMIDT HAD TEMPORARILY SMOOTHED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BONN AND WASHINGTON OVER NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND THE ACCORD WITH BRAZIL, THROUGH HIS DECISION TO REFRAIN FROM FUTURE EXPORTS OF REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY.

7. THE WAAK ARTICLE ALSO ADDRESSES ANOTHER ASPECT OF THE NUCLEAR ISSUE: THE PROPOSED MULTILATERAL CONFERENCE BETWEEN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY EXPORTERS AND IMPORTERS, AND JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN BREEDER REACTORS BY GERMANY, FRANCE, BELGIUM, ITALY, AND THE NETHERLANDS. ON THE FIRST QUESTION, THE ARTICLE REPORTS THAT ALTHOUGH NO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 BRASIL 06221 02 OF 02 271355Z POSS DUPE

FORMAL PLANS FOR A MULTILATERAL CONFERENCE BETWEEN NUCLEAR IMPORTER AND EXPORTERS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, SCHMIDT PLANNED TO RAISE THIS ISSUE IN WASHINGTON. BONN OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY CONSIDER A MULTILATERAL MEETING THE BEST METHOD OF REGULATING NUCLEAR EXPORTS WITHOUT THE DANGER OF WEAPONS PROLIFERATION OR DISCRIMINATION OF ACCESS TO NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY. ON THE QUESTION OF DEVELOPMENT OF BREEDER REACTORS BY FIVE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, OFFICIAL GERMAN SOURCES WERE REPORTED TO SAY THIS SUBJECT DID NOT DESERVE THE ATTENTION OF THE MEETING BETWEEN CARTER AND SCHMIDT. THE ARTICLE REPORTS THAT DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN BONN DOWNPLAY THE CREATION OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF FAST SODIUM REACTOR SYSTEMS (SERENA), AS A MERE FORMALIZATION OF A LONG WORKING RELATIONSHIP. THE DECISION TO DEVELOP A FAST BREEDER REACTOR REPORTEDLY WAS MADE DESPITE INTERNAL OPPOSITION BY THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN THE FRG.
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